

Hundreds Take Advantage of MIT's New Commuter Subsidies

By Ramya Sankar
STAFF REPORTER

About 700 Institute employees have signed up for free transit passes through the Institute for the month of September.

The free passes are part of a series of new commuting options being offered this year by MIT. Environmental impact and the growing MIT community are cited as reasons for the changes in commuting options, which include an increase in MBTA commuter rail subsidies and free transit passes for September for employees who park at MIT five days a week.

"By offering free passes for a month, maybe more people will take this option," said John DiFava, director of facilities and security. A total of 683 employees who would otherwise drive have signed up this year for the free September pass, 12 of which have potentially signed up to get monthly T passes, according to Larry Brutti, operations manager of the Parking and Transportation Office.

Last year, there were around 3,200 MIT employees who were full-time drivers, Brutti said.

The new initiative also includes a

discount of 50 percent on monthly T Passes for all zones.

Previously, monthly T passes were offered on a sliding scale subsidy according to the zones traveling. Creating a flat 50 percent off on all zones will hopefully attract more full time drivers to switch to transit, Brutti said.

Brutti said he also hopes this will highlight the occasional parking program on campus and off campus sites which allow commuters to park for \$4 a day for up to 8 days in a month.

The changes will cost the Institute \$70,000, all of which is coming out of the employee benefits fund.

However, for each commuter that switches over to public transit, the Institute could save \$3,000. The Institute leases 900 parking spaces off campus for \$3,000 a year. If approximately 23 daily commuters switched over to taking public transportation, the program would pay for itself, Brutti said.

The new program is also looking at allowing commuters to park at the Lincoln Lab site and Wellesley campus, and then take the shuttle to the main campus. The Parking and Transportation Office has secured

20 parking spaces at the Lincoln Laboratory site and hopes to get 10 satellite parking spots at Wellesley by September, Brutti said. This will provide commuters with access to the free shuttles to the main campus from those coming from the west.

According to the Parking and Transportation Web site, the number of parking spaces available is regulated by the City of Cambridge and the Clean Air Act of 1973, which allows for parking for no more than 36 percent of the commuting population.

These new incentives are being provided in order to cut down the carbon footprint of the MIT community as well as to accommodate the growth of the institute. "We want to be sensitive to the needs of the community and our carbon footprint," DiFava said.

The Parking and Transportation Office is working on hiring a new commuting coordinator to work full time on the initiative. They are also working with the biking community to offer facilities for showers and lockers for those who bike to campus.

For more information, see <http://web.mit.edu/facilities/transportation/>.



WILLIAM B. YEE—THE TECH
Professor Steven B. Leeb '87 instructs freshman Rui Hu how to ride the Go-Kart with Tucker Chan '12 looking behind them. The Go-Kart is a product of Power Electronics Laboratory (6.131).

Nir Discusses GSC Goals, Challenges Facing First-Year Graduate Students

By Austin Chu
STAFF REPORTER

This is the fourth interview in a five-part series introducing incoming students to some of MIT's faculty, staff, and student leaders. Today, The Tech features an interview with Oaz Nir G, the president of the Graduate Student Council, who describes the GSC's advocacy and offers advice to incoming graduate students.



KEVIN ZHANG
Oaz Nir is the current Graduate Student Counsel President.

The Tech: To open, tell us a little about yourself.

Oaz Nir: Well, I'm in the Health Sciences and Technology program, which is a joint program between MIT and Harvard Med. School. I've been here for three years. ... For my undergraduate [education], I went to Duke University, where I majored in math and English.

TT: How have you found grad school, specifically grad school here at MIT, a different experience than your undergraduate years?

ON: I think the major difference between undergrad and a PhD program is that undergraduate life is a lot more structured. You've got classes to go to. You've got some flexibility in terms of choosing those classes, but your schedule day-to-day is in many ways set, to some extent.

In graduate school, things are way more free-form. It's kind of up to you and your advisor to set research goals and to meet those.

At the same time, though, I think there are a lot of similarities in terms of the ability to go out and do extra-curricular activities and do a lot more outside of the classroom and outside of academics.

I think that's actually a somewhat commonly held misconception about

Nir, Page 10

An Increase in Female Applicants Seen for Class of 2012 Admissions

By Arkajit Dey
NEWS EDITOR

In a college admissions cycle that saw major changes in financial aid and early application programs, the final admissions statistics and profile for the Class of 2012 remained comparable to previous years with the only sizable effect being an increase in female applicants to MIT.

The college admissions landscape saw two major changes this cycle: an increase in financial aid packages by MIT and other schools, and the removal of early application programs at Harvard and Princeton. The primary effect on MIT admissions was "more students applying early" and "more talented students applying overall," said Dean of Admissions Stuart Schmill '86. At 13,396 applications, there was an 8 percent increase in applicants this admissions cycle compared to the previous year. Just 1,589 (11.9 percent) of the applicants were admitted, lowering last year's acceptance rate by slightly less than half a percentage point.

Despite the increase in applicants, the Class of 2012 is slightly smaller than last year's class. With a total of 1,048 accepting MIT's offer of enrollment, the admissions yield this year was 66 percent, a dip from last year's record high 69 percent. (For additional admissions numbers, see the table to the right.)

And while the male to female

ratio remained at 54 percent to 46 percent like last year, the number of female applicants rose significantly.

Of the 3,391 female applicants, "a double digit percent increase" from last year's class, 761 (or 22.4 percent) were admitted, said Schmill. Just 8.8 percent (828 of 9,464 male applicants) were admitted.

"The female applicant pool remains more self-selecting," Schmill said. "We admit the best students regardless of gender, and we are pleased that this turns out to be as balanced as it is."

Nearly two-fifths of the class

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Class of 2012 Profile

Gender	Male	54%
	Female	46%
Ethnicity / Citizenship	African American	10%
	Asian American	25%
	Caucasian	34%
	Mexican American	8%
	Native American	1%
	Puerto Rican	3%
	Other Hispanic groups	3%
	Other / No Response	7%
	International citizens	9%
Geography	States represented	49
	State not represented	Wyoming
	Countries represented	63
Schooling	Public school	66%
	Private school	15%
	Other schooling	19%
	High schools represented	791
Just for Fun	Most popular boy name	Michael
	Most popular girl name	Elizabeth

SOURCE: MIT ADMISSIONS
For more Class of 2012 statistics, see http://www.mitadmissions.org/topics/pulse/incoming_freshman_class_profile/index.shtml.



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WORLD & NATION

Durable Goods Orders Defy Pessimism

By Catherine Rampell
THE NEW YORK TIMES

Orders for durable goods, a report that is considered an indicator of future manufacturing activity, topped analysts' predictions in July and recorded its third consecutive monthly increase.

The increase was led by a sharp rise in transportation equipment, the U.S. Commerce Department said Wednesday.

"It was just one of those nice, unexpected summer surprises," said Joseph Brusuelas, chief economist at Merk Mutual Funds. "It's been a bad, bad year for the economy, and any good news is welcome."

The dollar amount of the durable goods orders — products like cars, computers and aircraft, items that have a life expectancy of at least three years — increased 1.3 percent in July, matching a revised increase of 1.3 percent for June. Analysts had predicted that orders would remain flat in July, citing a recent Institute for Supply Management survey that showed overall manufacturing to be stagnating, as well as concerns that a slowdown in consumer spending would begin to hit the sector.

Rules Rolled Back Penalizing Companies for Legal Help

By Eric Lichtblau
THE NEW YORK TIMES

The Justice Department on Thursday will roll back a controversial set of rules that penalized companies if they insisted on paying employees' legal fees or protecting their confidential communications with corporate lawyers. The long-awaited new guidelines, officials said, will no longer allow federal prosecutors to indict a company that takes such measures with its employees.

Deputy Attorney General Mark Filip is scheduled to announce the new policy on Thursday at the New York Stock Exchange, a site of strong symbolic importance because Wall Street firms and their lawyers have attacked the old restrictions as onerous and unconstitutional.

"Penalizing a company for paying the legal fees of its employees is simply outrageous," said Mercer Bullard, a securities law professor at the University of Mississippi Law School. "In cases where they say 'we are going to bring down your company unless you waive attorney-client privilege,' that has to stop."

Seven Are Killed, Family Held Hostage in Kashmir

By Somini Sengupta
THE NEW YORK TIMES

Violence in Indian-controlled Kashmir flared anew on Wednesday as gunmen attacked an Indian army post near the city of Jammu and then barricaded themselves in a private home, waging a daylong battle and holding a family hostage.

According to the Indian army, at least seven people were killed, including two gunmen suspected of being militants. Four children were believed to be among those being held.

Indian security officials said that the attackers were militants who had entered from Pakistan and carried out a deadly rampage.

Television reports from Jammu indicated that shooting continued throughout the day in a densely populated residential neighborhood, with soldiers fighting the gunmen holed up in a two-story house. By evening, security forces were negotiating with the gunmen on the release of the hostages.

India and Pakistan have bitterly contested control of Kashmir since the partition of colonial India in 1947. Relations between them have steadily worsened in recent months, and the hostage-taking occurred on the heels of violent protests by Hindu and Muslim groups in Jammu and Kashmir state, the Indian-controlled part of Kashmir.

Obama Secures Democratic Presidential Nomination

By Jim Rutenberg and Jeff Zeleny
THE NEW YORK TIMES

DENVER

When Sen. Barack Obama announced in early July that he would give his nomination address in an outdoor stadium in front of 75,000 people, he wowed members of both parties who saw it as an inspired stroke of campaign image making.

But as he landed here Wednesday and prepared to become the first presidential candidate in nearly 50 years to accept his party's nomination on such a big stage, the plan seemed as much risky as bold.

With daunting challenges of logistics, style and substance, the plan was hatched before the Republicans began a concerted drive to paint Obama as a media sensation lacking the resume to be president. Now Obama aides are feeling all the more pressure to bring a lofty candidacy to ground level, showing that Obama grasps the concerns of everyday Americans.

On Wednesday, workers were still making changes to Invesco Field, home to the Denver Broncos, so it would feel more intimate, less like the boisterous rallies that served

Obama so well early in the primaries, but also created the celebrity image that dogs him.

They were still testing camera angles, so Obama would appear among the giant crowd, not above it. They took steps to reduce the echo effect, familiar to football fans, of speaking in such a cavernous space. Planners scrapped their idea to turn the audience of 75,000 into a giant phone bank, in response to fears that the cell phone system would crash (people will instead be asked to text-message friends and neighbors to support the campaign, program aides said would be effective nonetheless.)

And workers put the finishing touches on the backdrop — faux columns intended to suggest a federal building in Washington and create an air of stateliness. (The McCain campaign quickly named it the "Temple of Obama," a label repeated by some media commentators.)

For Obama, the dramatic setting of the speech stands in contrast to the "workmanlike" message he intends to offer.

"I'm not aiming for a lot of high rhetoric," Obama said Wednesday as he made his way to Denver. "I am

much more concerned with communicating how I intend to help middle-class families live their lives."

Obama holed up in a Chicago hotel for hours over the weekend, and worked on the address well into the night this week with a small group of aides. He has studied several acceptance speeches, including Bill Clinton's in 1992, Ronald Reagan's in 1980 and John F. Kennedy's in 1960.

"I have been working hard on it," Obama said, answering a reporter's question about how this speech compares to the keynote address he delivered four years ago. "Do I feel pressure? I think people know that I can give the kind of speech that I gave four years ago. That's not the question on voters' minds."

Some aides worried about the setting overwhelming the message. But those closest to the planning said they had no regrets and were sticking to the sort of big-event politics that no other candidate has been able to match this year.

"We are leaning into this, how can you not?" said Jenny Backus, a campaign strategist working on the convention plan.

McCain Set to Announce Running Mate on Friday

By Elisabeth Bumiller and Michael Cooper
THE NEW YORK TIMES

WASHINGTON

Sen. John McCain has decided on his running mate, two Republican strategists in contact with McCain's campaign said Wednesday. He is expected to reveal his choice at a rally at a basketball arena in Dayton, Ohio, at 11 a.m. on Friday.

McCain's decision is known only to his small inner circle of advisers, no more than three or four people, who have refused all public discussion on the matter. Republicans close to the campaign said that the top contenders remained the same three men who have been the source of speculation for weeks: former Gov. Mitt Romney of Massachusetts, Gov. Tim Pawlenty of Minnesota and, possibly, Sen. Joseph I. Lieberman, independent of Connecticut.

It was unclear how seriously McCain was considering his good friend, Lieberman, who favors abortion rights and whose selection could set off a revolt among delegates at the Republican National Convention next week in Minneapolis-St. Paul as well as a furious backlash among Christian conservatives, a crucial voting bloc of the Republican Party. But as recently as Tuesday, McCain was said to still be entertaining the idea of Lieberman, who was Al Gore's running mate on the Democratic presidential ticket in 2000.

Under this scenario, McCain's choice of Lieberman would help him appeal to women, independents and conservative Democrats in a tough year for Republican candidates. "It's really alive in McCain's mind," said one Republican consultant familiar with some of the campaign's delib-

erations.

Other Republicans said they suspected that whatever McCain's personal views, his aides could be pushing Lieberman with reporters as part of a disinformation campaign to stir interest in the selection and to make it appear as if McCain, a longtime opponent of abortion, was open to all possibilities and was therefore more of an independent candidate.

Some Republicans also said that Lieberman did not catch fire as a campaigner in 2000 and that he would alienate more voters, particularly evangelicals, than he would attract.

McCain's inner circle was described as divided on the choices, although one Republican close to the campaign said that there had been no raging internal debate. Whatever the aides' opinions, McCain was said to have made the decision on his own.

WEATHER

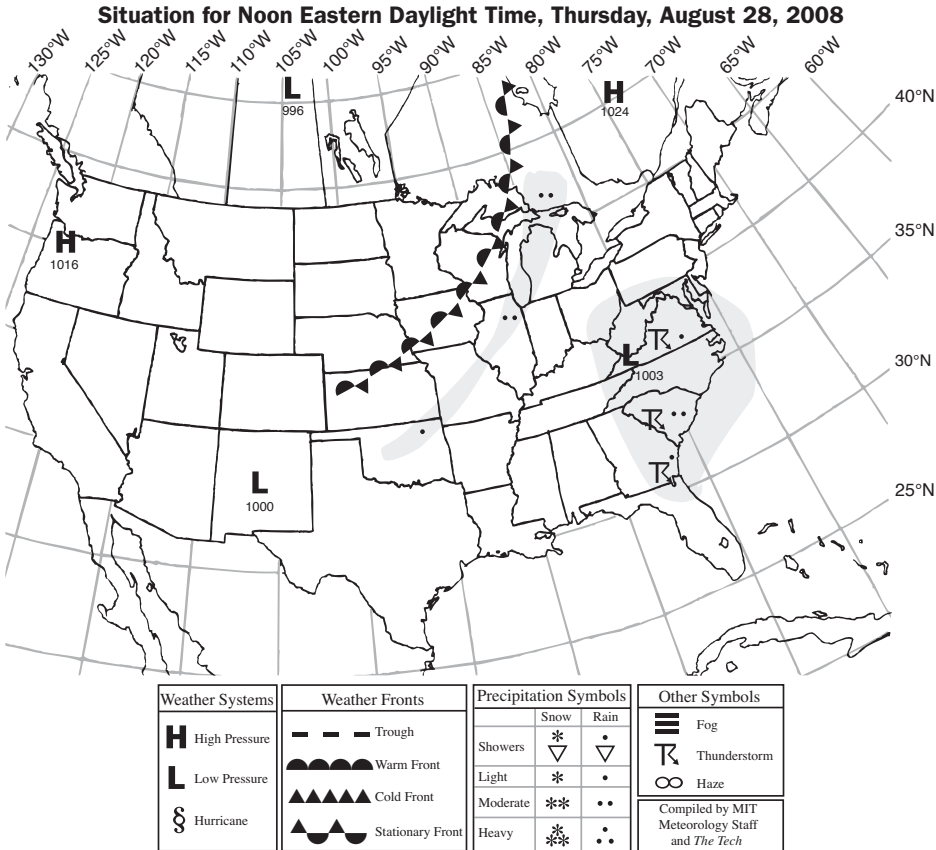
Still Sunny and Dry

By Roberto Rondanelli
STAFF METEOROLOGIST

As the summer comes to an end, we are still enjoying a rare sight for this season: sunny and dry days. The rest of the summer was in contrast very wet and stormy. July is climatologically the driest month of the year in Boston with a normal total of about 3.06 in (78 mm). This year the accumulated rain during July was 6.00 in (152 mm) with a total of 17 days with rain making it the 6th wettest July since 1872. June and August so far have also been wetter than normal. The total seasonal rainfall (13.9 in) is far from record breaking (24.89 inches in 1955) but it is still remarkable, making it at least within the 15 percent of the rainiest summers in Boston.

As for the rest of this week, we will continue under the influence of a strong high pressure that will give us at least a couple more dry and sunny days. The weekend will bring a band of showers that will cross the region Saturday afternoon.

Extended Forecast
Today: Mostly sunny. Low 59°F (15°C), high 74°F (23°C).
Tonight: Mostly clear and pleasant. Low 62°F (17°C).
Tomorrow: Mostly sunny to partly cloudy in the afternoon. High 74°F (23°C).
Saturday: Mostly cloudy and a chance of thunderstorms in the afternoon. Low 62°F (17°C). High 77°F (25°C).



Defiant Envoy to NATO Gives Voice to New Russia

By Clifford J. Levy
THE NEW YORK TIMES

MOSCOW

Here is one measure of the aggressive shift in Russian foreign policy in recent days: Dmitri O. Rogozin, Russia’s representative to NATO, a finger-wagging nationalist who hung a poster of Stalin in his new ambassadorial office, is not sounding so extreme any more.

“There are two dates that have changed the world in recent years: Sept. 11, 2001, and Aug. 8, 2008,” Rogozin said in an interview, explaining that the West has not fully grasped how the Georgia conflict has heightened Russians’ fears about being surrounded by NATO. “They are basically identical in terms of significance.”

“Sept. 11 motivated the United States to behave really differently in the world,” he said. “That is to say, Americans realized that even in their homes, they could not feel safe. They had to protect their interests, outside the boundaries of the U.S. For Russia, it is the same thing.”

Only a few months ago, the blustery Rogozin, 44, was regarded even in the Kremlin as more performance

artist than diplomat. Established officials sometimes rolled their eyes when he was mentioned, as if to acknowledge that Vladimir V. Putin, Russia’s president at the time, had sent him to NATO to do a little trash-talking to rattle the West.

Yet Rogozin’s arrival at alliance headquarters in Brussels, Belgium, in January might be seen as an omen of the crisis to come. He quickly scorned what he called the “blah, blah, blah” diplomatic niceties and pounded away at a single theme: after years of affronts, Russia had had enough.

Its invasion of Georgia three weeks ago made that apparent, as did its decision on Tuesday to recognize the independence of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, the breakaway enclaves at the center of the hostilities. Now the rising stature of Rogozin, who called NATO criticism of Russia’s military action “bigoted and indecent,” underscores Russia’s new tone — one adopted by both Putin, now prime minister, and President Dmitri A. Medvedev.

Rogozin has become a prominent Russian voice even as he remains a provocative figure in Moscow who

led a political party that espoused anti-immigrant appeals — including an advertisement showing dark-skinned immigrants throwing watermelon rinds on the ground — described by some opponents as racist.

After the Georgia conflict broke out, NATO said there would be no “business as usual” in relations with Russia, and Russia in turn suspended some military cooperation. The Kremlin refrained from canceling all ties, saying it would continue to provide assistance in Afghanistan. Still, in comments this week, Medvedev has assumed a tough stance.

“We do not need illusions of partnership,” he said Monday in a nationally televised appearance with Rogozin. “When we are being surrounded by bases on all sides, and a growing number of states are being drawn into the North Atlantic bloc and we are being told, ‘Don’t worry, everything is all right,’ naturally we do not like it.”

“If they essentially wreck this cooperation, it is nothing horrible for us,” he said “We are prepared to accept any decision, including the termination of relations as a whole.”

U.S. to Transfer Security Duties In Anbar Province to Iraqis

By Erica Goode
THE NEW YORK TIMES

BAGHDAD

The American military will hand over responsibility for the security of Anbar province, once a stronghold of the Sunni insurgency and one of the most violent regions in Iraq, to the Iraqi government as early as Monday, Iraqi and American officials said Wednesday.

The turnover would be a milestone for American officials, who have said that reduced violence in the western province shows that a partnership there with the local forces known as Awakening Councils has been successful.

The transfer would also be the first in a province bordering Baghdad, where there has been intense sectarian conflict. Other provinces that have been shifted to Iraqi control have been in the less troublesome south and in the northern Kurdish region.

Security officials in Anbar and a spokesman from the office of Mowaffak al-Rubaie, Iraq’s national security adviser, said the turnover was scheduled to take place on Monday.

In Washington, Gen. James T. Conway, the Marine Corps commandant, said at a news conference that a ceremony marking the transfer of responsibility could occur in the next few days.

Lt. Col. Chris Hughes, a spokesman for the Marine Corps in Anbar, said that the number of American troops there had dropped from 37,000 in February, to 25,000, and that the Iraqi police force had grown to 28,000, up from 5,000 three years ago.

“There have been dramatic changes in Anbar,” he said.

American forces were originally scheduled to transfer control in late June, but the transfer was postponed. At the time, American military officials said that a dust storm had made it impossible to fly dignitaries in for a ceremony and that the postponement was unrelated to a suicide bombing near Fallujah a day earlier that killed 20 people.

In July, the Anbar Provincial Council asked the American military to delay turning over security for at least a year, saying that Iraqi forces were not prepared to keep tight

control of the province’s borders. The appeal was widely perceived as stemming from a bitter dispute between the Iraqi Islamic Party, which has long been politically dominant in Anbar, and the increasingly powerful Awakening Council forces backed by the Americans.

The Awakening Councils were drawn to large extent from the ranks of Sunni Arab insurgents who had fallen out with leaders of al-Qaida in Mesopotamia, a homegrown Sunni Arab extremist group that American intelligence agencies have concluded is foreign-led. The Awakening forces took issue with the other group’s violent tactics and religious extremism, and were paid by the American military to provide security.

The councils are credited with reducing crime and violence in Anbar, but have recently come under attack by the Iraqi army, which is controlled by the Shiite government in Baghdad.

The government’s campaign has been particularly pronounced lately in the area west of Baghdad, where the Iraqi army has arrested scores of Awakening members.

As Raw Materials Costs Increase, Job Site Thefts Rise Nationwide

By Kate Murphy
THE NEW YORK TIMES

Sue Wentz and her husband, Eugene, saved for five years, living in a modest home in a low-income neighborhood of Houston, before they broke ground in January on a 4,300-square-foot house on 12 acres in Magnolia, Texas, a woody suburb about 40 miles northwest of the city. They are overseeing the construction themselves to control costs. So it was with dismay that they arrived at the job site one morning in July to find that all the copper wiring and air-conditioning tubing had been ripped out of the rough frame of the house.

Besides the financial hit — \$11,000 — the theft took a psychological toll. “I felt so violated, and now I don’t trust anyone,” said Sue Wentz, who teaches English at a community college.

The couple, along with Ryan, their 7-month-old son, spent nine nights in a tent on the property to guard the place until workers could put Sheetrock over replacement wiring. Moreover, Eugene Wentz, an airline pilot, boarded up all of the

entrances, limiting access to a single security door with two deadbolts and no handle. “Now we lock it up every night, and when the contractors arrive the next morning, they call us and we tell them where we hid the key,” he said.

According to professional homebuilders, law enforcement officials and insurers, the Wentzes’ experience is not unique. Larceny at residential construction sites across the country has increased significantly in the last two years because of soaring prices of building materials like copper, lumber and cement, they said. The National Association of Home Builders, a trade group, estimates that the annual cost of theft to the industry has reached \$5 billion. The problem has meant higher material and insurance costs for builders, who pass them along to buyers, sometimes to the tune of tens of thousands of dollars. In the end, that can add as much as 10 percent to the cost of a home, builders and developers said.

A cottage industry of guard services, surveillance devices and private investigators has emerged to

prevent theft as well as catch thieves in the act. Larceny is an issue at commercial sites, of course, but residential projects are particular targets because they are often easier to access. The situation is worse in regions where homebuilding remains relatively strong, like in parts of Texas, North Carolina, New York and Louisiana, and remains a problem in states where home construction has slackened, like Florida, Nevada, Michigan and Arizona.

“Builders in Chapter 11 and lenders foreclosing on properties still under construction aren’t as diligent about security,” said Mark Ouimette, managing director at Beecher Carlson, an insurance company based in Atlanta that underwrites policies for homebuilders.

Indeed, police officials from Tucson to Miami report that thieves often peruse foreclosure filings to find idle and unsupervised projects. Insurers like Beecher Carlson said that theft had forced them to increase homebuilders’ insurance rates by 10 percent to 15 percent in the last two years.

Red Sox at Center of Sarasota’s Local Economic Stimulus Plan

By Michael S. Schmidt

THE NEW YORK TIMES

SARASOTA, FLA.

Officials trying to prop up the sagging economy here are convinced they have found a remedy: annexing a piece of Red Sox Nation.

Boston’s on-the-field success in recent years has made the organization a darling among fans and marketers. And the emerging power of the Red Sox name, fueled by frenetic fans who travel widely to see their team play, has created a level of interest from Sarasota sometimes seen from cities hoping to land the Olympics. Officials here are trying with all their civic might to poach the club’s spring training operation from Fort Myers, where it has been since 1993.

There have been friendly calls from local politicians to team executives, a pledge to build a replica of Boston’s Fenway Park, and discussions about both a public land purchase and an increase in the tourism tax to pay for the stadium and improvements to an existing minor league complex. A grass-roots organization called “Citizens for Sox” has even formed to help in the effort.

The officials here say the team would attract more tourists and businesses than any other major league franchise. They hope the relocation would help lift real estate prices, increase the number of flights to and from Boston and boost construction.

Swiss Release Frozen Assets Of Pakistan Party Leader

By Souad Mekhennet

THE NEW YORK TIMES

FRANKFURT, GERMANY

Switzerland has released millions of dollars in assets belonging to Asif Ali Zardari, the widower of the former Pakistani prime minister Benazir Bhutto, Swiss authorities said.

Zardari’s accounts were frozen in 1997 at the request of Pakistani authorities investigating allegations that Zardari had received kickbacks while he was a government official and Bhutto was prime minister.

In June, Pakistan’s attorney general notified the Swiss that he was no longer investigating Zardari, who leads the Pakistan People’s Party, one of the country’s largest political parties, and is expected to be chosen as president next week.

The attorney general wrote that neither Zardari nor Bhutto had done anything illegal, and that the charges had been politically motivated, the Swiss prosecutor general, Daniel Zappelli, said Wednesday in a telephone interview. As a result, the Swiss dropped a money-laundering case against Zardari and released his assets.

“For money laundering to be proven, you have to show it was the product of a crime, but we don’t have any evidence for a crime committed in Pakistan,” Zappelli said.

The value of the assets is about \$60 million, said a Swiss official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because the figure had not been disclosed publicly.

The Swiss action came as a shock to Daniel Devaud, the judge in Geneva who originally investigated the charges. He said it should not be interpreted as a sign of Zardari’s innocence.

Russia Sees New Realm Of Concern: Black Sea

By Andrew E. Kramer

THE NEW YORK TIMES

MOSCOW

Russian commanders said Wednesday they were growing alarmed at the number of NATO warships sailing into the Black Sea, conceding that NATO vessels now outnumbered the ships in their fleet anchored off the western coast of Georgia.

As attention turned to the balance of naval power in the sea, the leader of the separatist region of Abkhazia said he would invite Russia to establish a naval base at his territory’s deep-water port of Sukhumi.

And in a move certain to anger Russia, Ukraine’s president, Viktor A. Yushchenko, said he would open negotiations with authorities in Moscow to raise the rent on the Russian naval base at Sevastopol, which is in Ukraine’s predominantly Russian province of Crimea. The United States is pursuing a delicate policy of delivering humanitarian aid on military transport planes and ships, to illustrate to the Russians they do not fully control Georgia’s airspace or coastline.

The policy has left American and Russian naval vessels maneuvering in close proximity off the western coast of Georgia, with the Americans concentrated near the southern port of Batumi and the Russians around the central port of Poti. It has also left the Kremlin deeply suspicious of American motives.

Israelis in Anguish Over Abuse, Murder of 4-Year-Old

By Ethan Bronner

THE NEW YORK TIMES

JERUSALEM

Israel is in the grip of a nightmarish tale of cross-generational infidelity, child abuse and murder. The story is blanketing the media, while police detectives speak of never having been so shaken by a case and an anguished nation is asking how it could happen here, in a society that considers itself especially caring and intimate.

The story centers on the killing of a blue-eyed, 4-year-old French girl named Rose, her guileless smile haunting the front page of every newspaper. Police say she was killed by her grandfather, a 45-year-old Israeli, who had lured her mother away from his own son, the dead girl’s father, to be his lover. They say the man has confessed to having stuffed the child’s body into a red suitcase and dumped it into a river. Divers are searching.

Those are the bare outlines but the details of familial dysfunction over many years, recounted by police and lawyers in press conferences, only add to the horror that has so gripped Israelis.

The grandfather, an unemployed taxi driver named Ronny Ron, was living with the girl’s mother, 23-year-old Marie Pisam. Together they have two daughters of their own.

Their relationship began four years ago when Marie and her husband, Benjamin, Ron’s biological son, came with the infant Rose from France to meet him.



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OPINION

Sororities at MIT — Come as You Are

Stories From Greek Women on Campus

By Yicong Liu

Come as you are. Sororities at MIT are about finding a place where you feel comfortable as an individual as well as feel supported as part of the community. Each sorority on campus has a distinct personality, yet all were founded on similar values and as a support system for women at MIT. Many have found a strong community with their sorority, and that experience has made all the difference in their lives at MIT. Below are a number of tales straight from Greek women on campus:

* * *

“I had tried a lot at MIT so far, and I figured that joining a sorority was the least likely thing I could do. As soon as I got my bid from my sorority, I knew that it was the family I had been missing while my own family was far away. I had someone to turn to when I was having a bad day; psets were still impossible but I had someone to stay up with me until we got some sort of answer; friends were never too far away when walking down the infinite meant seeing a sea of greek letters. At MIT we're often caught up with how little and insignificant we are — being a part of such a powerful women's organization changed all that for me. For the first time since I walked into class as a little freshman, I was part of my own sisterhood and community.

I never felt that so strongly as when my sisters supported me in the most important aspect of my life. As a freshman, I organized a national Brain Tumor 5K in Washington DC. I was the volunteer coordinator and had been having a hard time getting people to sign up. So I sent an e-mail to my chapter asking if anyone would like to come with my family and me to DC and volunteer for the run. Immediately I had sisters signing up, and a few weeks later my dad rent-

ed a large van and took me and a group of my sorority sisters the eight hours to Washington DC. They supported me when things did not go as planned, and filled in gaps in the volunteers where I needed more help. After the run, I had people coming up to me saying that these women, my sisters, had changed their perceptions of sorority women and that they were so incredibly impressed.

After that weekend, I knew that not only was I a part of a sorority, I was part of a group of women who were powerful mind-changing supportive sisters. They made me want to be a Recruitment Counselor, because I know if I found something so incredibly powerful, other women can find that too.”

—Cheryl M. Kwin '09

* * *

“In high school, joining a sorority was never my idea of fun. Surprisingly, I never knew that MIT had sororities before freshman orientation when my roommate mentioned them to me. She already had her mind set on joining, and I was still unconvinced that they would improve my social life in any real way.

When I returned to my dorm after my first night of recruitment, I was surprisingly excited about the prospect of joining a sorority. All of the women were intelligent, friendly, and impressive, and I began to see them not as people who would dictate my social life, but a group of people who would be a good resource at MIT.

Perhaps the best part about being in a sorority is the fact that all of the women make me laugh. They are wonderful hysterical people who are smart and dedicated to their work, but also take time to laugh. And through four years of laughs, they find themselves, become adults, and learn that life is nothing without friendship and loyalty.

—S. Campbell Proehl '09

S. Campbell Proehl is a Tech Campus Life

columnist.

* * *

“I didn't believe in paying for my friends and that was why I didn't go through Recruitment my freshman year at MIT. I thought that I was extroverted enough to find friends on my own. I ruled out the possibility of joining a sorority without a real basis for my reasons. It wasn't until sophomore year that I realized that surviving MIT was more difficult than I had thought.

MIT is such a busy place. It was so easy to get lost in the cracks, overload myself with work, and forget to eat several times. The few people who were really close to me started getting busier and delved into different studies as sophomore year approached.

After much thought, I decided to go through Recruitment my sophomore year — the idea of making an educated decision about sororities wouldn't hurt anyone. I have met so many amazing girls, and they have been there for me when I received all my bad test grades or made sure that I had a proper dinner in my stomach or consoled me when I couldn't speak to anyone about my Grandmother's death. I am really thankful for them and they have made my MIT experience more memorable and when I look back, I think of the fun times, the laughter, and the love we share for one another.

I honestly regret joining a year late. To me, that meant missing out on one more wonderful year with the best girls in the world — no one should pass up on that opportunity!”

—Jennifer Tang '09

* * *

We encourage you to do the same as these inspiring women who were once in your shoes. Come to recruitment as you are. It's perfectly okay to just come and look around!

Yicong Liu '09 is the Panhellenic Association Vice President of Recruitment.

The Struggle for Peace in Lebanon

By Alice Nawfal

Ever imagine how college life would be different in a university other than MIT — say several thousand miles away in a Middle Eastern country like Lebanon? During IAP this year, I was in Lebanon and I decided to ask my friends about their college experiences. I even visited a college right after student government elections. Having lived in Lebanon for almost 17 years of my life, I was not surprised by the diversity of the students who come from all Lebanese districts, speak various accents, and belong to different political groups and religions.

What I did not expect though, was the prevalence of political life among students and how it defined almost everything they do. Students only befriend other students who belong to their own political party, arguing and even fighting intensely with the rest. Student governments are not elected according to virtues, but according to the dominance of a certain party on campus. It was a disappointing shock to see friends I have known for years no longer on speaking terms!

Lebanon has 17 different religions. Its populace is a melting pot of different cultures from the Mediterranean and Levant area. However, this country also has been the home of much bloodshed and violence. It has been occupied by or been a part of numerous empires including Phoenicia, Persia, Armenia, Assyria, Macedonia, Babylonia, the Romans, Byzantium, Arabia, Crusaders,

Ottomans, Greater Syria, France, and Israel. In 1975, a civil war broke out that lasted 15 years and left an estimated 150,000 killed. An even greater number of people were left maimed, kidnapped, or imprisoned in foreign prisons. Though the war has ended, conflict continues.

There have been more than 20 bombs set off in the last four years, resulting in the death of several high-ranking politicians and dozens of civilians. In 2006, the Lebanese resistance group, Hezbollah, fought a war with Israel leaving around 1200 Lebanese victims. In 2007, Palestinian militants in refugee camps revolted against the Lebanese army and killed at least 160 soldiers. Militants have also been blamed for an August 13, 2008 explosion that claimed 18 lives. Lebanese politicians fight verbal wars where they threaten each other or claim to be threatened. In January 2007, clashes in Beirut Arab University led to 4 dead students and 200 injured. In May 2008, intense fighting broke out between different political factions, killing almost 100 civilians and nearly leading to renewed civil war.

How could such a little country — less than 40% the size of Massachusetts — be the recipient of so much bloodshed and hatred? The Lebanese populace has been constantly fighting the Syrian presence in Lebanon, the Israeli army, Palestinian militants in refugee camps, and, worst of all, each other. Lacking unity, Lebanese have been shamelessly fighting with members of their own families and with previously close friends merely because they belong to opposing political factions. Citizens seem

to blindly follow leaders, most of whom have changed political positions several times in recent years. They do not question the nature of things, they accept all that they are being told and use religion to defend their actions. How can this nation survive so much internal conflict and regional tension?

For the past 4 years, the Lebanese people have not had any moment of peace nor rest. They have been in a constant phase of being in war, but with whom? Who is it that they are continuously fighting? Who is the 'enemy'? Is it one entity or is it everyone?

Who are the Lebanese people called upon to despise and hate? It seems that they are brainwashed into believing that we are constantly in war with others and with ourselves.

However, who is to blame for the state of affairs? Is it a foreign government that is forcing them to hate and fight? Is it the Lebanese government's own doing by failing to offer modern infrastructure, regular services and a productive economy? Or, after all these centuries of occupation by foreign nations — and this is the greatest fear of all — has the urge to fight become inborn in the Lebanese people?

Whoever is to blame, this constant fighting has left the Lebanese people hopeless for a peaceful future. Finding a solution seems almost impossible since the people of the nation stand divided — unsure of what they are fighting for and what they are fighting against.

Alice Nawfal is a sophomore in the Department of Mathematics.

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CAMPUS LIFE

Talk Nerdy to Me

Fondling Follies

By Christine Yu
STAFF COLUMNIST

Editors Note: This column is part two of a four part series about rounding the proverbial bases.

If getting to first base can land you in MIT Medical — then going further can sometimes only get worse. Second base is typically defined by fondling and groping — what this really means is frantically ripping off each other's clothes and exploring each other's human anatomy first hand (quite literally). It's a prelude to fucking, and unless you're roommate is coming back soon, you're probably going to take off your clothes. So, transitioning from the vanilla making out to throwing clothes into the abyss of a messy room can sometimes get awkward.

The awkwardness starts at the beginning — unclasping the bra. Even experienced guys sometimes struggle with this. It's incredibly

embarrassing when someone turns on a light just to figure out the clasps. Usually, a simple inward push should work — especially if the girl is less busty. If she's bustier, there are more hooks — so, work each hook one at time if it seems too complicated to do it in one swoop. If she's wearing a sports bra, that should be easy — just slip it over her head. Come on, guys, its simple classical mechanics. Girls, if it's taking too long, just help the guy out, unhook the bra yourself; I mean, come on, you do it every night.

After the bra comes off, here's where a lot of guys mess up. There's a difference between

fondling and squeezing. Applying too much pressure doesn't feel good — I'd even liken it to getting your "family jewels" squeezed. So, follow the golden rule here, don't grab or squeeze. Also, girls, guys don't care much for anything done to their chest.

Now we're getting to the bottom of this — the "private" parts. First of all, for both genders, keep your nails well-groomed: no one wants to get scratched. Well-moisturized hands are also a luxury. Make sure the girl is well-lubed — otherwise, it just hurts. Start off slowly, don't just jab a fist in there — that's just proof porn lies. Also, that can be dangerous. Gynecological emergen-

cies are unnecessarily embarrassing— getting injured while hooking up, while possibly funny, is not fun to explain to your parents if they're footing the medical bill. Guys run the risk of less injury here — I've never heard of a handjob hospitalization. All guys masturbate — most give themselves a handjob on a regular basis. Because they masturbate, they know what they like. I encourage good communication here — each person's anatomy is slightly different, and if something feels good, why not tell them? The angle is important for both guys and girls, and you should let your partner know when theta is just right. (I'm worried that line is way too nerdy and proof of MIT's effect on me.)

The prelude to sex doesn't need to be awkward — it can actually be the best part. So, note where you threw your clothes, and just enjoy yourself.

The angle is important for both guys and girls, and you should let your partner know when theta is just right.

WMBR's Top Five Songs About Smack

- 5 — Iggy and the Stooges — “Lust for Life”**
You probably know this as the song from those Royal Caribbean ads. But its about smack. And its not one of those deals where after the song becomes big, people on the internet talk about how it COULD be about smack — I'm looking at you “Hotel California.” The man sings “Yeah, I've had it in the ear before.” Just makes you wanna go cruisin', doesn't it?
- 4 — Spiritualized — “Lay Back in the Sun”**
Maybe the most triumphant song about heroin ever written, J. Spaceman coos about the “fire” and “fever” inside him and seems downright giddy as he sings “gonna' have me some good times girl / good dope, good fun.” When they came through Boston this summer, they played this song with backup vocals from a small gospel choir. It was AWESOME.
- 3 — Sonic Youth — “Junkie's Promise”**
Your music-nerd friend always talks about how awesome Sonic Youth is for a reason. This is a solid song from SY during their prime. And, uh, its about a junkie. In other news, they're done with Geffen and signing to an indie for their next album.
- 2 — Elliott Smith — “Needle in the Hay”**
Best known from the suicide scene in “The Royal Tenenbaums,” this is a seriously haunting song about the life of a junkie. Strangely enough, it loses none of its gravitas when Kermit the Frog parody Sad Kermit covers it. Plus, in the parody music video, Kermit gives Rowlf head. Seriously. YouTube it.
- 1 — Velvet Underground — “Heroin”**
Coming out of late 60s NYC, the VU attempted to bring dark subject matter prevalent in literature to the musical medium, which was comprised mostly of schlock. “Heroin” plays testament to their success, one of the innumerable ways they influenced all rock music to come. Even if THEY don't know it, your favorite band owes its sound, in part, to the VU.

Disclaimer: Songs by grunge artists were disqualified for inclusion, not only because they overused the topic, but because now that Dugan graduated, no one can prevent me from refusing to acknowledge its existence as a musical genre. Songs by punk/thrash/hardXcore artists similarly excluded, because everyone already knows G.G. Allin was one scary mofo.

WMBR is the campus radio station— any student can join, be it to do a show or just check out our ridiculously large music library. E-mail gm@wmbr.org if you're interested. And if that's not your thing, you can listen to us at 88.1 FM or streaming at wmbr.org.



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Please contact Susan Cohen at cohen@media.mit.edu to set up an appointment

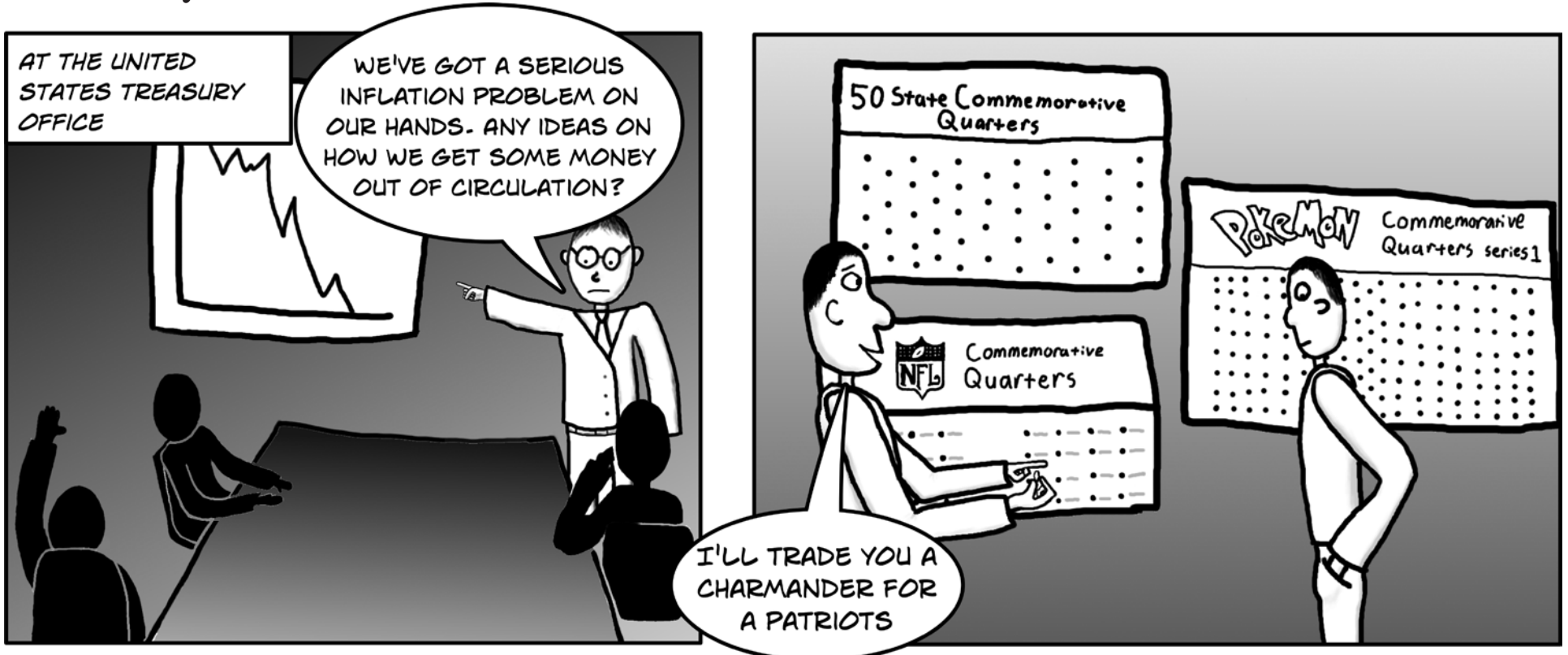
Grants guidelines are available at:

<http://web.mit.edu/arts/do/funding/grantguide.html>

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Steal My Comic

by Michael Ciuffo

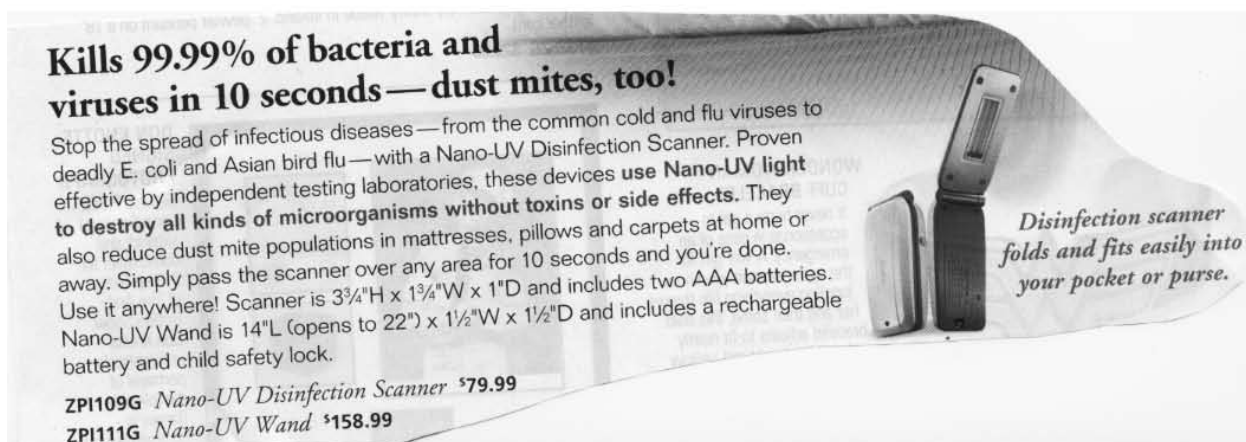


The Daily Blunderbuss

by Ben Peters

Ad from skymall

What it means:



Nano - UV!

Wow! I was so sick
of ångström - UV...

Theory of Pete

by Cai GoGwilt



Don't let the cat get your tongue.
letters@tech.mit.edu

Pseudoscience

by Daniel Klein-Marcuschamer

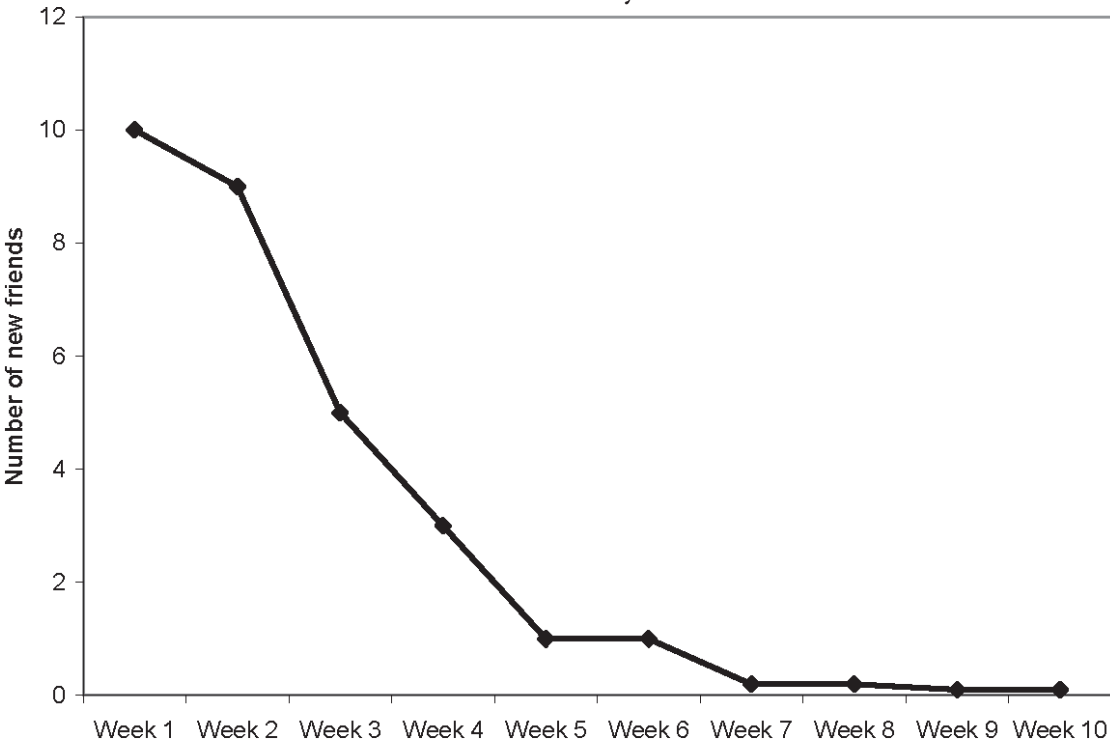


Figure 35. The graph shows the number of new friends per week made by an average incoming MIT student after orientation begins. The data shows a quasi-first order decay in the number of friends as a function of time (t_c is nearly -0.6 week^{-1}). The effect is both related to the exponential decrease in social activities after classes start and a similarly-shaped increase in workload (results not shown). Exceptions to the trend given by this figure can be found in the works by T. Earpub and M. Charles (MIT Press, 2008).

Blobbles

by Jason Chan

face the facts

The world is made of one-dimensional objects called "strings."

that makes no sense.



Crossword Puzzle

Solution, page 11

- ACROSS**

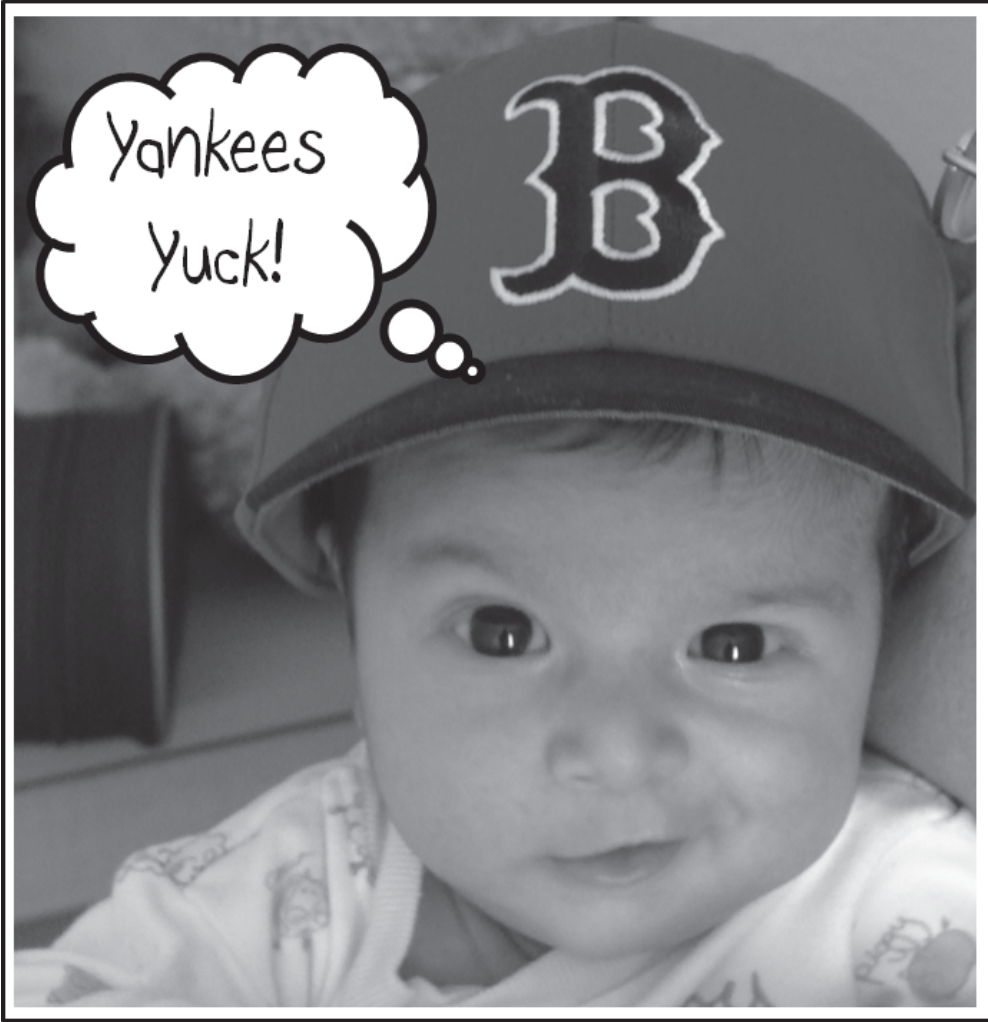
 - 1 Stay clear of
 - 7 Slightly cracked
 - 11 '70s rock duo, ___ & Eddie
 - 14 Leon lady
 - 15 Diner's card
 - 16 Head feature
 - 17 Venus and Serena head-to-head
 - 19 Dr. of rap
 - 20 Cave feedback
 - 21 Prime cut
 - 23 Bloody
 - 26 Tot rod?
 - 28 Tax-sheltered \$\$
 - 29 Onassis, to pals
 - 30 Gore to Clinton, and vice-versa
 - 32 Capital of Croatia
 - 34 Dish in a lab
 - 35 Wrath
 - 36 Over the hill
 - 37 Skylit lobbies
 - 41 Tropical fruit
 - 43 Improbable victories
 - 44 Publishing preview
 - 48 Wager
 - 49 Crude person
 - 50 Arduous journeys
 - 51 Baby's call
 - 52 Last
 - 54 Verdi heroine
 - 56 Barn bird
 - 57 Preakness picks, perhaps
 - 62 School of the future?
 - 63 "The Joy of Cooking" author Rombauer
 - 64 Begrudges
 - 65 Bug someone?
 - 66 Watched
 - 67 Singer Nicks
- DOWN**

 - 1 Ballpark fig.
 - 2 Comprehend
 - 3 MSNBC rival
 - 4 Hive hoard
 - 5 Cartman of "South Park"
 - 6 Old-time laundry device
 - 7 MD's grp.
 - 8 Sported on the waves, perhaps
 - 9 Very old
 - 10 Rhine tributary
 - 11 Felt hat with a brim
 - 12 Cattle catcher
 - 13 Spanish hot sulfur springs
 - 18 Forenoon
 - 22 Restrictions
 - 23 "Eyeless in ___"
 - 24 Port of Algeria
 - 25 Diana of "The Avengers"
 - 27 At the ready
 - 30 Repeat showing
 - 31 Like lesser wines
 - 33 Admiration
 - 36 Extra wages
 - 38 Ms. McEntire
 - 39 List entry
 - 40 Movie dog
 - 42 Insurance statistician
 - 43 Good points
 - 44 Shudders at
 - 45 Harmony music genre
 - 46 Artillery burst
 - 47 Approve
 - 51 Purple haze
 - 53 Mutt of Garfield's jokes
 - 55 "___ Be Cruel"
 - 58 Little shaver
 - 59 "Poison" singers Bell ___ DeVoe
 - 60 Luau souvenir
 - 61 Compass dir.

1	2	3	4	5	6		7	8	9	10		11	12	13
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Deep Thoughts by Sara

Roberto Perez-Franco 'G



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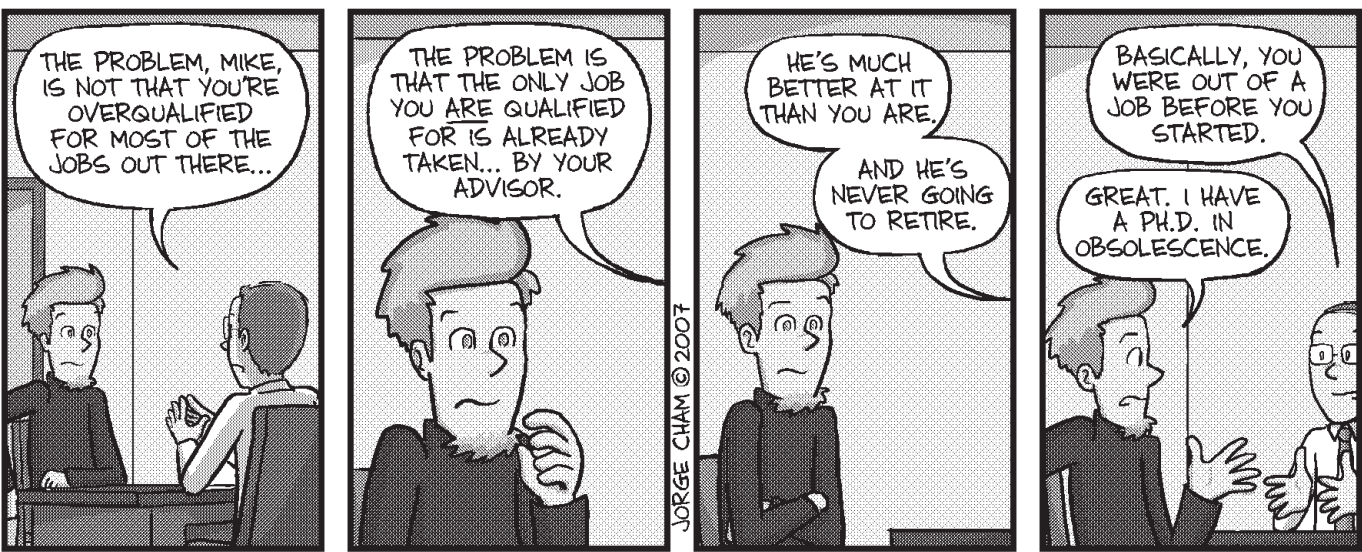
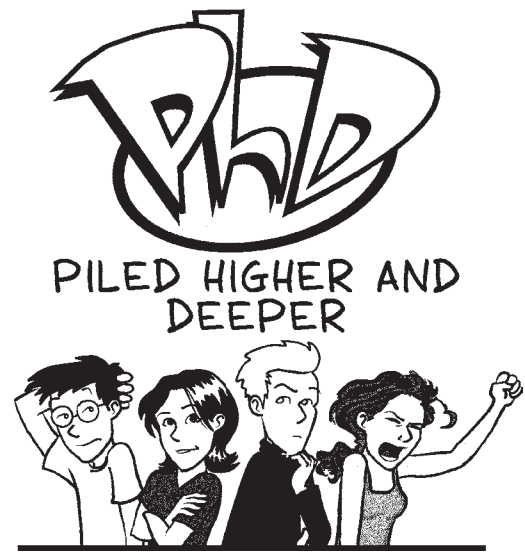
© Puzzles by Pappocom

Instructions: Fill in the grid so that each column, row, and 3 by 3 grid contains exactly one of each of the digits 1 through 9. Solution on page 11.

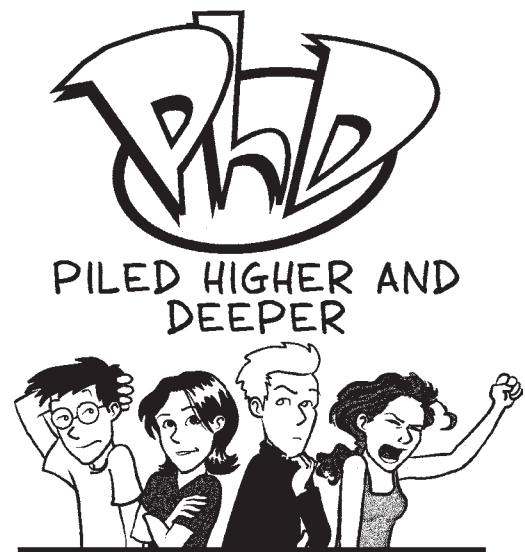
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	3						1	
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	6			8		1		
	4	5	2					
	8		6				3	2

Doonesbury
BY GARRY TRUDEAU

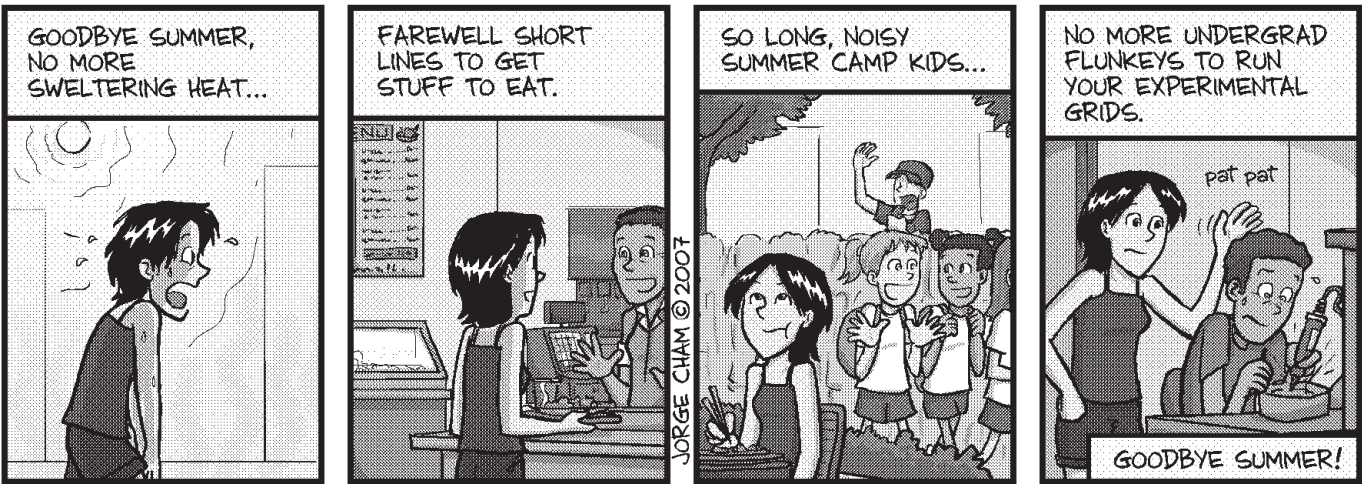
Dilbert® by Scott Adams



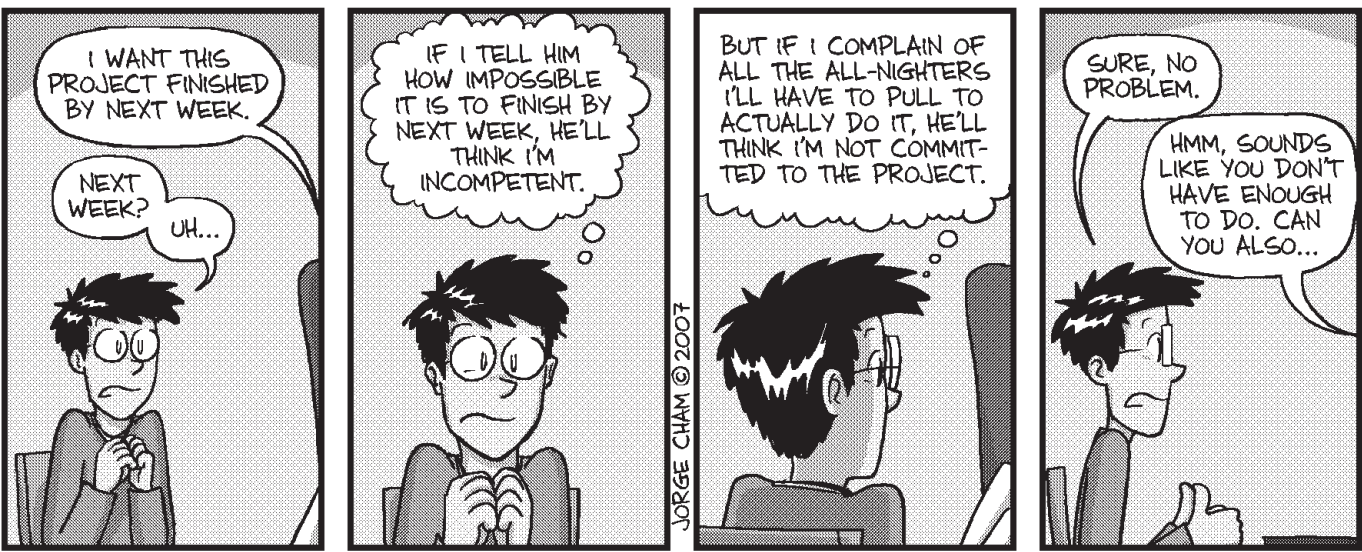
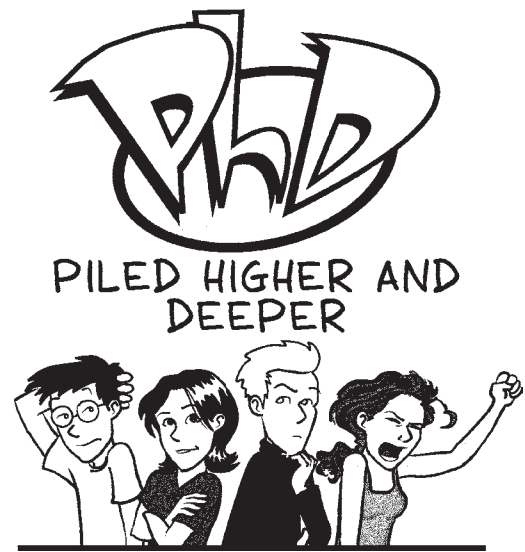
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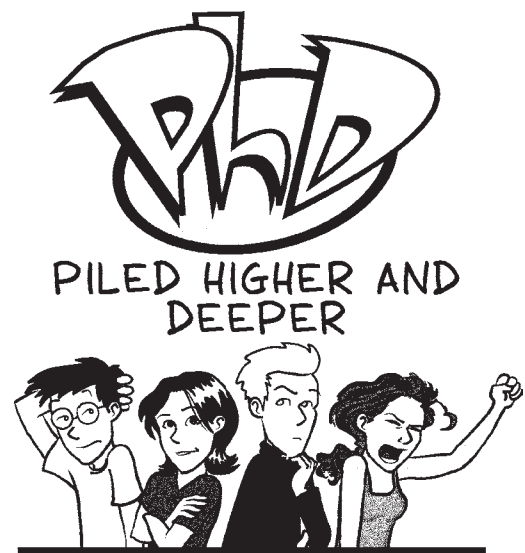
GOODBYE SUMMER



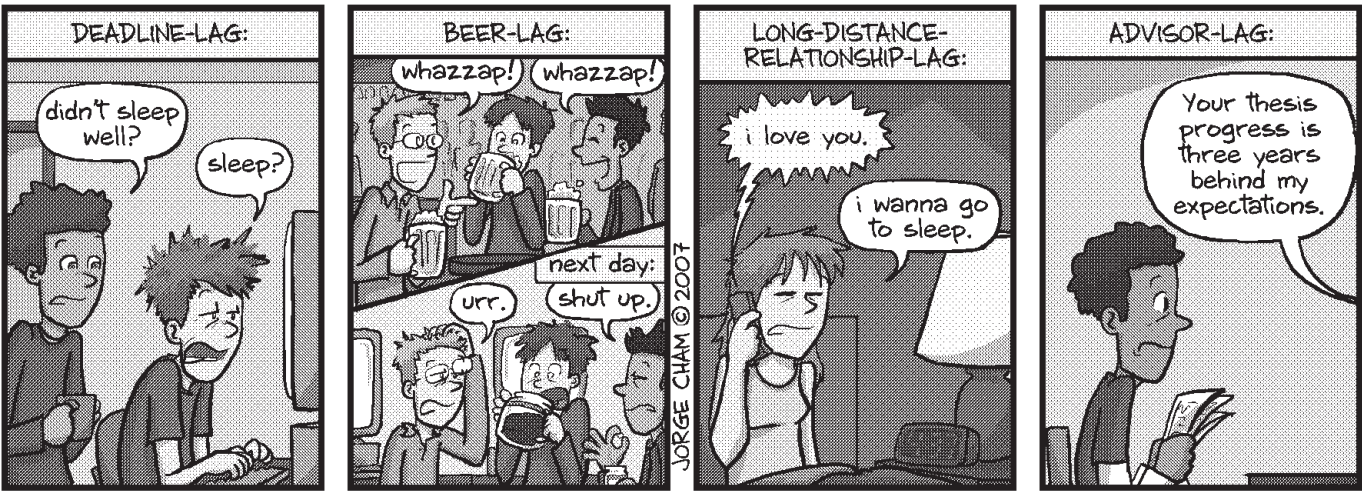
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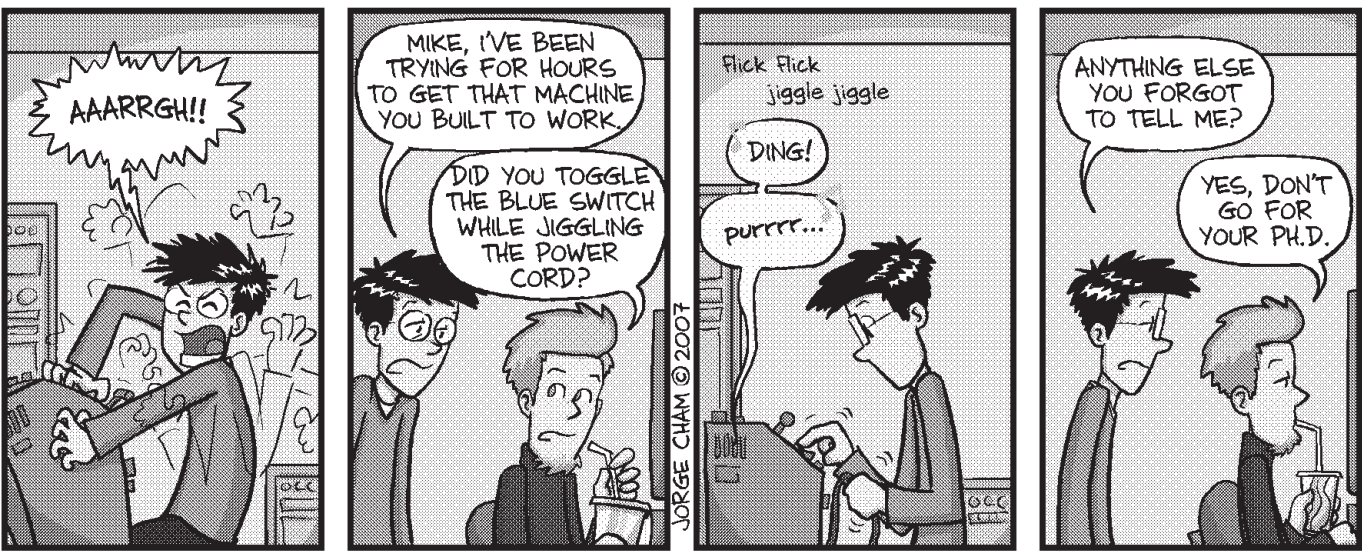
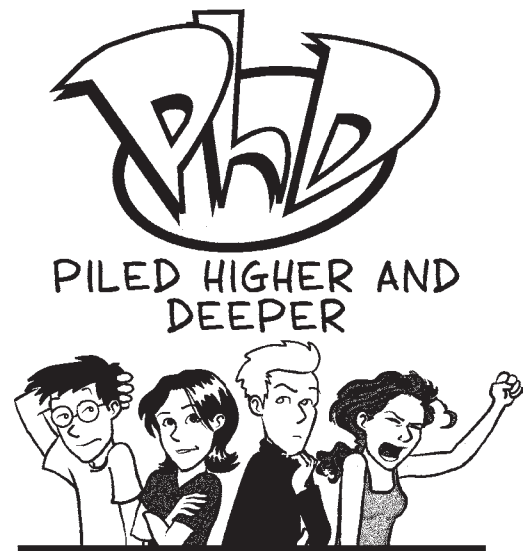
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GSC President Talks About Council's Committees, Goals, Recent Successes

Nir, from Page 1

graduate students, that all we're supposed to do is work in the lab. And in fact, I think it's actually true that people's work in the lab is improved if they have side interests and side hobbies and get out and let their minds take a break, or at least use their minds in different ways.

TT: What kind of side interests and hobbies have you gotten involved in?

ON: I've been involved in the Graduate Student Council.

I started out as the editor of the *Graduate Student News* magazine. ... My reasons for getting involved in the *GSN* were really based on my interests in writing and journalism. At that point, I didn't actually know that much about the Graduate Student Council, which publishes the *GSN*. Over the course of the year, I learned more about the student council and saw the really great things that it does and really important things for graduate students, and so I wanted to get more involved in that.

I was secretary the subsequent year in 2007-2008, and this year I'm president.

Besides the Graduate Student Council, which is a pretty time-consuming endeavor, I'm also a GRT in Next House. ...

TT: Are there any resources that you've found at MIT that you wish you had found earlier in your time here?

ON: Yeah, there are plenty, actually.

One, like I already mentioned, I wasn't really aware of what the Graduate Student Council did during my first year here. I think that's actually something that falls on us to do a better job of marketing ourselves and making clear to students what we're about and what we do.

More practically, there are some resources that I didn't take advantage of at the beginning of my time

here. One is the Careers Office. They have great resources over there. ... I think they have useful panels and workshops that can give you an idea of what you might want to do once you get out of school, and those are things that I wasn't really aware of and didn't take advantage of during my first year, year-and-a-half here.

There are some more esoteric things that a lot of people aren't aware of, like the Furniture Exchange, which is over by MIT Mail Services [in Building WW15], which provides pretty decent furniture for a pretty reasonable price — something that can benefit a lot of graduate students, especially ones moving into unfurnished apartments.

TT: Is there any advice that you have for the graduate students who are just arriving this week?

ON: Looking back to my experience during my first year, I think it's important to try to cast a wide net in terms of who you meet and who you're able to learn from. I think it's a common tendency for graduate students to stay within their lab group or within their department, in terms of the individuals they interact with. ... There are so many people here doing so many interesting things, and you can learn a lot from an area that maybe you think is different from yours.

Cast a wide net in terms of who you try to meet [and] who you try to talk to, especially during the first couple months. ...

TT: What do you think are the biggest challenges that graduate students face?

ON: I'd say the primary thing is this misconception that graduate students are here just to do their research and just to work in the lab. There's so much more to do besides just research. ...

Living a more balanced life in terms of how you spend your time and where you devote your mental interests — simple things like getting some physical activity — really makes all of your different pieces work better. ... You do better at everything if you're a little bit more diverse. I think that's probably the single most important challenge facing graduate students. ...

It's certainly true that the experience of graduate students at MIT is tremendously varied. There are people coming in right out of undergraduate [programs], people that have worked a couple of years, and there are people that have worked a couple of decades. ... There are students that are married, students that are single, and students with families.

TT: What are some of the major goals the GSC has for this upcoming year?

ON: One of our primary goals is strengthening our interactions and our relationships with different administrators at MIT. At the top of that list is forming a strong relationship with the new dean for student life ... and helping him understand what life is like for graduate students here and the diversity of experiences that graduate students have.

There's a new committee on student engagement that was formed at the end of last year. The GSC is committed to working within that committee and with the different administrators, undergraduate students, and faculty on that committee, to try to improve the level of input into decisions that are made.

Beyond that, we have a lot of specific goals. We set up a task force on graduate housing and residential life. The motivation behind that is the new graduate dorm NW35 is opening up. ... I'm happy how it turned out in the end, but along the way, there were some major hiccups in the communication process with the administration and with the specifications for the rooms, the cost of the rooms. What we're trying to do here is get on the ball early and figure out what graduate students want in the next graduate housing project. ...

We've also put together a second task force on alumni relations. We're

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working with the Alumni Association, which does great work. The need that we've identified is that there aren't too many programs that the Alumni Association has that connect graduate students with graduate student alumni. There could be a lot of value in seeing where graduate students end up, what career paths they take, and what sort of advice can we glean from them.

The concrete project for that task force is going to be a graduate student gift campaign, which is along the same lines as the senior class gift. We're going to work in the fall to determine what the campaign should be for. A couple of ideas on the table are fellowships for graduate students, a fund for graduate student life, or the emergency general care fund that the GSC, the [Office of the Dean for Graduate Education], and MIT Dental have all contributed to. ...

In terms of the core programs, we have four major standing committees — the Orientation committee, the Activities committee, the Academics, Research, and Careers committee, and finally the Housing and Community Affairs committee. The titles of those committees give a good sense of what they're responsible for. ...

TT: Why should graduate students care about what the GSC does?

ON: The GSC really does some fundamentally important things on behalf of graduate students here. In addition to aiding in the growth of graduate community through orientation and the activities we put on throughout the year, the GSC also performs a really fundamental advocacy role.

The GSC is the group that gathers information on increases in the cost of living and argues for an appropriate increase in stipends of students. It's hard to stress how important that is for the life and the quality of life for graduate students.

Also, we've been involved — and one of our great successes of the past year — is getting this dental plan for graduate students. It's something that's been a gap in terms of medical coverage for graduate students here. The achievement of the dental care plan was in large part the work of the Housing and Community Affairs committee of the GSC, along with the support and very significant efforts of the Office of the [Dean for Graduate Education] and from Steve Lerman ...

TT: If students have concerns, where should they go? If students are interested in getting involved with the GSC, how do they start to get involved?

ON: We have a pretty well designed Web site, <http://gsc.mit.edu>. If you go there, it's pretty clear how to submit feedback.

In terms of getting involved in the GSC, there are many ways. The starting points for most people would be either to join as a representative, which means to serve on our legislative body ... or to join one of our committees and do work within those bounds.

The latter option is as simple as looking up on the MIT Events Calendar when, say, the next meeting of the Academics, Research, and Careers committee is and just showing up to it.

In terms of the former option, we have representatives from departments and from dorms, as well as several representatives that are either at large, or representing some interest groups. The process varies from department to department, from dorm to dorm, but it basically involves gathering a petition of signatures and submitting that to the vice president.



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Where Are the Cities Of Georgia? Google Maps Doesn't Know

By John A. Hawkinson
STAFF REPORTER

Over the summer, we at *The Tech* heard there was a war between Russia and the country of Georgia. Curious, I turned to the popular source for cartographic data, Google Maps. Stunningly, Google Maps has no data for Georgia.

No cities, no roads, no bodies of — oh wait, it does seem to have twenty or so small bodies of water. No rivers, though.

Compare this to Microsoft's *maps.live.com* (search for "Tbilisi," Georgia's capital). There are over a hundred locations marked in the initial view, and more as you zoom in. (In fairness, though, the Spy Division over at Google seems to be working fine. If you click on "Satellite," you can see down to the 100-feet:1-inch scale, enough to distinguish individual automobiles. That's better than the 500-feet:1-inch you can get for Dick Cheney's house — ask for "38.92,-77.07." Not quite as good as the 20-feet:1-inch you get in Cambridge, the Pentagon, or the White House.)

With some prompting, we went and asked Google; this was back on Aug. 12.

Their initial response, via e-mail,

was to affirm they'd made no changes and simply "do not have local data" for Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan. (Apparently some people out there thought Google might've deleted Georgia.) This at 9:30 a.m., Pacific.

A few minutes later (they don't seem to believe in telephones over there), they declined to indicate when they might have this data, or why it hasn't been a priority. Georgia, by the way, is home to 5 million people, and is slightly smaller than South Carolina.

It seems Google felt they could do a bit better, since later that day, at 5:49 p.m., they put up a blog post, <http://googleblog.blogspot.com/2008/08/where-is-georgia-on-google-maps.html>.

Apparently the people at Google "simply weren't satisfied with the map data we had available," so they decided to put up nothing.

And of course, they hurried to assure us all that they had not accidentally hit the delete key, and the "data were never on Google Maps in the first place." (Whew! Also, data is still plural. What a relief.)

They close by saying they've "started preparing data" on the "countries that are still blank." Doesn't seem to be much progress in the past two weeks.

Oh well, there's always Microsoft.

Every State But Wyoming Represented In Freshman Class

Class of 2012, from Page 1

hails from the West Coast or the Mid-Atlantic (21 percent and 18 percent, respectively). New England and the Southeast (including Puerto Rico) are the next two most common home regions, together accounting for three in 10 freshmen. The Midwest and the South contributed about a fifth of the class. And slightly more than a tenth of freshmen are from foreign countries. Every state except Wyoming is represented in the class.

Ethnically, the Class of 2012 is a tenth African American, a quarter Asian American, 34 percent Caucasian, 8 percent Mexican American, 1 percent Native American, 3 percent Puerto Rican, and 3 percent of other Hispanic groups. The remaining seven percent did not respond or are of other descent.

Seven hundred and ninety-one high schools are represented in the freshman class, a slight drop from 831 last year. Schmill attributed it to "normal variation" resulting from "fewer students enrolling." About two-thirds of freshmen went to public school, 15 percent to a private school, 11 percent to a religious school, and 7 percent to a foreign school. Fewer than one in 100 freshmen were home schooled.

Schmill called the incoming class "as talented as any prior class we've admitted, and more diverse in more ways than ever before." He described it as consisting of "inventors, humanitarians, artists, athletes, accomplished scientists, comedians, major league techies, and students who are just tremendously good people."

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Average SAT Scores Hold Steady Across the Nation

By Sara Rimer
THE NEW YORK TIMES

After two years of slight declines, SAT scores held steady this year, according to a report released Tuesday by the College Board, the nonprofit organization that owns the exam.

The average scores for the three sections of the exam were identical for the classes of 2007 and 2008: 502 in the critical-reading section, 515 in mathematics, and 494 in writing.

Scores for each section range from 200 to 800. The average composite score, on a scale of 600 to 2400, was 1511 for both classes.

The number of test takers was more than 1.5 million, an 8 percent increase from five years ago and a 29.5 percent increase from 10 years ago.

While girls continued to narrow the gender gap in math, their average score was still 33 points lower than the score for boys, which was 533.

In critical reading, girls have closed the gap to four points, compared with seven points 10 years ago. The average score in critical reading for boys was 504.

Girls outscore boys on the writing test — the difference this year was 13 points. The average score for girls in writing was 501.

Traditionally the biggest performance gap is between blacks and whites, and this year the gap on the three sections — reading, math, and writing — was 303 points. The gap between the wealthiest and poorest students was 356 points on the three tests. And the gap between those whose parents have the least and most education is the largest of all: 387 points.

Solution to Crossword														
from page 7														
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Federal Ruling Is Major Victory For Supporters of Free Software

By John Markoff
THE NEW YORK TIMES

SAN FRANCISCO

A legal dispute involving model railroad hobbyists has resulted in a major courtroom victory for the free software movement also known as open-source software.

In a ruling Aug. 13, the federal appeals court in Washington said that just because a software programmer gave his work away did not mean it could not be protected.

The decision legitimizes the use of commercial contracts for the distribution of computer software and digital artistic works for the public good. The court ruling also bolsters the open-source movement by easing the concerns of large organizations about relying on free software from hobbyists and hackers who have freely contributed time and energy without pay.

It also has implications for the Creative Commons license, a framework for modifying and sharing creative works that was developed in 2002 by Larry Lessig, a law professor at Stanford.

That license is now used widely by organizations like MIT for distributing courseware, and Wikipedia, the Web-based encyclopedia. In March, the rock band Nine Inch Nails released a collection of musical tracks under a Creative Commons license.

The ambiguity facing open-source licensing has been one of the hurdles facing the movement, said Joichi Ito, the chief executive of Cre-

ative Commons.

"From a practical business perspective when big companies and their legal teams look at Creative Commons there are a number of questions," he said. "It's been one of the things their legal teams throw at us."

The appeals court decision reverses a San Francisco federal court ruling over the misappropriation of a software program by a company that publishes model train hobbyist software.

The free software, or open source, community has quarreled for several years with Matthew A. Katzer, a Portland, Ore., businessman who owns Kam Industries. Previously, Mr. Katzer has sued free software developers for patent infringement and the free software community has argued that he had failed to disclose earlier technology, known as prior art, in his patent filings.

A lawyer for Mr. Katzer did not return calls asking for comment.

In March 2006, Robert G. Jacobsen, a physics professor at the University of California, Berkeley, filed a lawsuit against Mr. Katzer claiming that his company was distributing a commercial software program that had taken software code from the Java Model Railroad Interface project and was redistributing the program without the credits required as part of the open-source license it was distributed under.

The decision to appeal the lower court ruling, which said that the

terms of the open-source contract were overly broad, was intensely debated within the free software movement. Some open-source advocates had worried that a loss before the appeals court would have been a disaster for the community, which has grown as an economic force during the last quarter century.

"I was terrified that we would lose," Mr. Jacobsen said. "But I thought it was the right thing to do."

There has long been a link between model train hobbyists and the free software movement. During the 1950s, for example, hobbyists who worked on the wiring of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology model railroad club project were informally known as "hackers," according to "Hackers: Heroes of the Computer Revolution" by Steven Levy. The term evolved to include people who developed and programmed computers and who passionately believed that software codes should be freely shared.

Mr. Jacobsen said he believed that the court's ruling was significant for the free software movement because it had thrived not on monetary gain but on individual credit for contributions.

"We don't charge for this and so all we really get is credit," he said, adding that anyone is free to use and modify the programming instructions created by his group as long as they retain the credit and distribute them with the programmer's instructions.

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WILLIAM B. YEE—THE TECH

Freshmen Continue To Have Fun At Orientation Events



ALEX H. CHAN—THE TECH



ALEX H. CHAN—THE TECH



WILLIAM B. YEE—THE TECH

(clockwise from top left)

Women's novice openweight rowing coach Aaron Benson talks about the crew program with Allison C. Hinckley '12 and Monica C. Oliver '12 during the Department of Athletics, Physical Education, and Recreation Gateway on Wednesday at Rockwell Cage.

Sara R. Segal '09, Eli A. Cohen '10, and Matthew L. Fisher '10 welcome Sarah R. Geller '12 (right to left) to MIT with warm smiles and bagels at the Boston T Party Event in the Student Center on Wednesday.

Maria Brennan (first from left), Assistant Director of the International Students Office tells jokes at International Students Office Welcome Reception. The reception was attended by over two hundred international students.

Dr. Elizabeth Vogel Taylor talks about the chemistry program at MIT with freshman Rachel G. Chasin during the Academic Expo in Johnson Ice Rink on Wednesday.

French instructor Sabine Levet talks about the options for French studies at MIT with freshman Emavieve R. Coles during the Academic Expo in Johnson Ice Rink on Wednesday.



WILLIAM B. YEE—THE TECH